1929

The New Spirit in Anglo-Catholicism

FRANCIS UNDERHILL

'The aim of the book is to plead for a new attitude on the part of the official Church towards Anglo-Catholicism, and on the part of Anglo-Catholicism towards the rest of the Church of England, in view of the coming of a most serious crisis in the life of the Church.'

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THE NEW SPIRIT IN ANGLO-CATHOLICISM

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The New Spirit in Anglo-Catholicism

BY

FRANCIS UNDERHILL, M.A.

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LONDON: 28 Margaret Street, Oxford Circus, W.1
OXFORD: 9 High Street
MILWAUKEE, U.S.A.: The Morehouse Publishing Co.
Printed in England

280.31 S
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86794

First impression, 1929

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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FOREWORD

IT may well seem temerarious for any person to intervene at so critical a moment in the history of the Church of England as this is admitted to be. Yet I have written this small book just now because I have good reason to know that great numbers of perfectly 'sound' Anglo-Catholics, while they might dissent from detailed statements here and there, would agree with the main positions taken up in it. And as these facts are not yet well understood, I think they ought to be made known as generally as possible.

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The New Spirit in Anglo-Catholicism

I

INTRODUCTION

A SHORT time ago the head master of a famous English Public School said in my hearing that any parents who showed interest in the religious training which their sons were to receive were almost always either Anglo-Catholics or Fundamentalists.

This saying affords an interesting glimpse into the religious circumstances of our day. I do not know much about Fundamentalists, but I do know a good deal about Anglo-Catholics, who would be generally regarded, I think, as the more important of the two groups. They are admittedly vigorous, progressive, and propagandist. But the movement is unpopular. The history of the past year or two has shown quite a surprising hatred of Anglo-Catholicism in many departments of English life. We were all astonished, for instance, to discover that this sentiment, far more than any other, was respon-

sible for the twice-repeated rejection of the Revised Prayer Book in the House of Commons. The same feeling may be noticed elsewhere—in the Press for instance. Anglo-Catholics generally get a bad press. Time after time the Anglo-Catholic Congress has had a far larger membership than the Church Congress ; yet, while the latter will get a page or more of *The Times* on several successive days, the former is lucky if it has thirty lines. Listen to any casual conversation in the club, the railway train, or the drawing-room, in which Anglo-Catholics happen to be mentioned, and you will notice the hostility which quite kindly persons at once manifest.

At the same time it is generally admitted that among the really practising members of the Church the movement is strong. It is not, as is sometimes claimed, the only live force in the Church of England—the liberal Evangelicals, for instance, are doing fine work—but the self-sacrificing zeal of Anglo-Catholics is universally admitted.

For even opponents do not deny that the history is a noble one. It is enough to mention such scholars as Pusey, Keble, Liddon, Scott Holland ; such parish priests as Mackonochie, Dolling, Stanton, the Pollocks ; these are just a few names, chosen from many which call up splendid memories. The side of Anglo-Catholicism which probably is best known to the Church in general is that which shows the

work in great city slums. It is a true story of heroism ; of priests giving lives and possessions without stint, often dying prematurely, worn out by their service of the poor. It is a story of sacrifice in money and personal labour by the laity, men and women. The cause of Catholicism in the English Church was the passion of these people's lives.

Great and beautiful churches were raised in grim streets ; and raised with little encouragement or financial help from the official body. Side by side with the churches were the schools. And day and night, year after year, went on the unceasing visiting, club work, charity. Spiritual foundations in individual lives were laid deep. But what need be said more ? It is all well known. And it is too well known also that the heroic work was again and again done in face of coldness, neglect, persecution. Bishops would not confirm in the churches ; the men were banned and shunned by their fellow priests, and ridiculed by the laity. Now at last the great deeds are recognized, when the pioneers have long been dead, and the very things for which they suffered are done in our cathedrals !

Moreover, it was not merely the souls of the people for which Anglo-Catholics have laboured. It is now generally recognized how greatly they cared for the social welfare of the men and women for whom they lived and died. In this they followed the best tradition. Space

will not allow detail ; let me merely quote words written about 1882 by Thomas Pollock, for thirty years curate and one year Vicar of S. Alban's, Birmingham. He said :

> We found and support great hospitals. Most of the outlay on these ought, I solemnly believe, to be spent on prevention. We knock a man down with one hand, and hold out sticking plaster with the other. We poison men, and then buy costly antidotes. When epidemic breaks out, people turn up their eyes and talk of providence. I have no patience with this ignorant slander of the Almighty. Men lay to the charge of God what is done by their own greed and dullness.

Burning words of a very noble man, but typical of many others of his kind and his religion.

This kind of thing has not ceased, either on the spiritual side or in social work. Still great slum parishes in London, Birmingham, the North, everywhere, are served by priests and loved by men and women actuated by the same ideal. The Church of England now admits it.

Why, then, should there still be fear and dislike in the public mind ? It is no sudden growth, though it has become more obvious lately. The opposition the Catholic Revival has met with from the official Church of England from the beginning almost until now is a fact which needs study ; while the further fact that its adherents are still a tiny minority of the nation appears to conflict with the claims made that it is naturally attractive to the normal man. What has happened ?

It cannot be said that Anglo-Catholics are fools. It used to be affirmed that this was so ; that the High Church clergy, while admittedly good and self-sacrificing men, who spent themselves in enthusiastic work among the poorest of the people, were intellectually quite negligible. Nowadays it has to be admitted that they have at least their fair share of the brains of the Church of England ; some competent authorities not otherwise friendly assert that they have more. It is therefore sometimes suggested that while Anglo-Catholics must be credited with brains, they lack common sense ; but this is special pleading !

Other and more cogent criticisms of the movement will be dealt with later ; the problem that Anglo-Catholics must face at once is their unpopularity among people who are neither fools nor harsh critics. It was expected until lately that before long the movement would win the Church of England ; but while great progress has been made, and the whole life of the Church is considerably affected, there is a decided check at present, both in the parishes and in the general life of the nation.

Men who believe, as I do, that while the Holy Spirit moves in many ways, historic Catholicism is the fine flower of Christianity ; and who believe also that the Church of England is the means by which historic Catholicism is meant to be brought into the national life of our country, are puzzled. We find it hard to un-

derstand why the faith which is to us so satisfying, so true, and so beautiful, should be suspected and disliked. Where is the fault? It must somehow be partly at least with us. It is our duty to look closely into events and motives, to see if we can do anything about it; and this little ephemeral book is an attempt to do so.

It does not represent *all* the strands which go to make up Anglo-Catholicism to-day. But at least it is the work of one who knows the movement and the men thoroughly. In one way or another I think I have been or am in touch with all sides of Anglo-Catholicism in England, whether it be at the Universities, in the great industrial cities, in the country places, in London. There are very few leading Anglo-Catholics—theologians, parish priests, organizers—whom I do not know personally; many of them very well. I am or have been in the inner counsels of the societies which direct the policy of the movement. I do not say this in any spirit of confident boasting; I set it down because the kind of people who I hope will read this book will naturally ask for credentials.

The historic Catholic religion is the thing I care about most in life; my daily work is to try to help men and women to build their lives upon it. But at present I find myself hampered, and the cause held back, by bitter and continued controversy, ranging round some of the very matters which are at the heart of my

beliefs. It is impossible to go on happily in one's own corner while strife rages in the general body. So I want to think out for myself and for other people the causes why that which I love is disliked by delightful and attractive persons with whom on almost every other subject I am agreed. What is the matter ?

The book is written primarily for those members of the Church of England who are interested in Anglo-Catholicism, whether they love or hate it. Many admit that they do not understand what it is all about. They do not see why things should not go on as they always have done, or seem to have done. Why should changes be made? While some Anglo-Catholics are so eager to make changes that they do not stop to explain why they do this or that new thing.

The book does not deal with theology, except incidentally. It aims first at showing how, historically, this strange and unique body we call the Church of England arrived at its present state of attempted comprehensiveness, and to claim that Anglo-Catholics have at any rate as good a right to be in it as anybody else has. This is coming to be admitted even by opponents. The book then proceeds to a frank confession of some of the more obvious faults of which Anglo-Catholics have been and are accused. I beg readers to believe that very many of us are uneasy and sorry about past mistakes, and eager to put them right. On the other hand, it must

be admitted that the Church of England has been astonishingly slow to realize, harness, and use the vigour of the Catholic Revival. Future historians will wonder, I think, at the failure of the official Church in the nineteenth century in this particular. Tragic blunders were made on both sides, from the effects of which we are now suffering.

But I desire above all to establish the fact that a better era has opened, in which generosity and trust are beginning to take the place of the old hostility on both sides. This is far from being realized as yet, but it is a real portent in the inner life of the Church of England at the moment. The aim of my book is to inquire how far both sides are now prepared to make acts of faith in one another, and to plead for a new attitude, on the part of the official Church towards Anglo-Catholicism, and on the part of Anglo-Catholicism towards the rest of the Church of England, in view of the coming of a most serious crisis in the life of the whole Church.

Note.—I use the expression 'Anglo-Catholic' in this book without prejudice. Whatever may be said against its use, there is no other term which covers the meanings implied in it.

II

A BRIEF HISTORICAL REVIEW

ONCE when I was working in Birmingham a young woman came to me after a service and said, ' I want to join the Anglo-Catholic Church.' ' Oh,' said I, ' what are you now ? ' ' Just Church of England,' she replied. It took quite a considerable amount of careful instruction to get out of her mind a mass of half-understood misconceptions which are shared by many much better educated persons than she. The sum of these mistakes is that Anglo-Catholicism is a new sect which has somehow arisen in England, half-way between the Churches of Rome and England, and independent of either.

One cannot blame people very much for such misconceptions. If any imaginative person, with a knowledge of Christian history, had invented a fiction embodying the characteristics of the post-Reformation Church of England (the real fact not being in existence), readers would merely have said that such a conception was an impossibility. But here it is, and here it is likely to stay, for all the prophecies of pessimistic seers. How did it come to be what it is to-day ?

Do we want to go back behind the Reformation?

When I was young there were idealists among my friends—they did not know very much history—who conceived that it would be an excellent thing if we could get back behind the Reformation and return to some delightful period which was called 'Merrie England,' or 'the Ages of Faith.' I do not suppose there are many such innocents to-day. We know more than we did about the pre-Reformation Church, and most of us realize with a shudder what a crying necessity the reform of the sixteenth century was. That is not to say that it was perfect; far from it. Many mistakes were made, and even in England a good deal was lost which succeeding ages have sadly missed. But it was quite inevitable that there should have been a Reformation; and I believe there are very few Anglo-Catholics who are not now aware of this fact.

In the sixteenth century there was an immense clearing of the theological air; some impossible beliefs, which had no place in the primitive faith, passed out. There was also much re-thinking of the presentation of Catholic Christianity; for instance, certain repulsive Eucharistic beliefs popularly held disappeared for ever: a whole unhealthy system of excessive cult of the saints, with the adoration of images and relics which accompanied it, came

down, to our infinite advantage and freedom. It is sometimes urged that cults of this kind are necessary for the poor and ignorant. Possibly they were once ; but nowhere in Christendom will the advance of education allow them to stay much longer. It is difficult to imagine any greater disservice to religion than to attempt now to restore them.

The 'Reformation Settlement'

In the English Church of the sixteenth century an attempt was made to include two apparently incompatible religious ideals. On the one hand, Catholics who denied the papal supremacy, but retained the Catholic view of the authority of the Church, of the Sacraments, and the Ministry ; on the other, the Puritans, who in the last resort founded their faith on private judgement, who thought little of Sacraments, and only accepted Ordination under strong protest. The attempt to weave the two together is represented historically in the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-nine Articles.

Strange consequences have flowed from this astonishing experiment. So far the two theological systems have not fused, though they have lived together, and still do so, in a way which in theory would have seemed impossible. But it has not been a peaceful history ; it is one of perpetual struggle, now one, now the other

element gaining a temporary domination, and too often persecuting the other when in power.

At first, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, Protestantism held the field with a success little realized by most Church people of to-day. Extreme Evangelicals now living would have been shocked if they could have seen the state of most of our cathedrals and parish churches in the reign of Elizabeth. Then, in succession to the Protestant ascendancy (I use the words without prejudice), under Charles I and Archbishop Laud came a Catholic revival, not very careful of the feelings of the other party. This was succeeded by the temporary overthrow of the Church of England, and a bitter Puritan domination. Again at the Restoration the Catholic element triumphed, and hundreds of sincere incumbents resigned or were ejected from their livings. During the eighteenth century, in spite of the preaching of John Wesley, the English Church settled down into a quiet latitudinarianism, with a surviving consciousness here and there that this was not all which could be said. And the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have seen the Catholic Revival, sometimes called from the place of its historical origin the Oxford Movement.

Looking at the history of the last four centuries in England as a whole we see the gradual recovery of Catholic principles in the Church, in spite of serious temporary set-backs. This is now fairly obvious. The Anglo-Catholics,

in the wide sense in which I want the term to be used, are those people—all of them—who take the view of the Church of England revived by the leaders of the Oxford Movement.

All this stir and controversy is what we should have expected to follow on the historical attempt to combine, within one Church, Catholic and Protestant elements. However that may be, at this stage of the argument I want to make one point of fundamental importance to our position. Whatever historical events may have taken place in the Church of England during the last four hundred years, and whatever the avowed teaching of some of her members may have been, she has retained the essentials of historic Catholicism. She upholds the authority of the Church over her members in doctrine and discipline ; she retains the Catholic Creeds ; she teaches the necessity of the Sacraments ; she has preserved the historic Orders of the Ministry. That is the basis of the Anglo-Catholic claim to be loyal members of the Church of England, as well as of that wider Church Catholic of which the English Church herself is a part.

The Catholic Idea

What, then, do we who hold such views understand by Catholicism ? It has been defined in the following terms by Dr. N. P. Williams, the present Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford.

'Catholicism,' he says, 'stands for a certain well-defined and well-known type of religious experience, activity, tradition, and "atmosphere."' When you strip off the affixes and suffixes which different communions have added to the word Catholic; when you delete the exclusive claims of the Roman and other Churches, you find a residuum, historically recognizable and devotionally capable of being worked out into a specific Catholic life. Thus I should say that the Eucharist offered last Sunday at S. Peter's in Rome, in the Greek Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, in S. Paul's Cathedral, London, and at Hinton-in-the-Hedges, in Northamptonshire, are all in direct historical and devotional descent from the Institution of the Holy Communion by our Lord in the Upper Chamber at Jerusalem on the night before He suffered. We see this idea emerging very early in the life of the Church, and we can mark the development through all its stages. Side by side with the sacramental history there is also a spiritually recognizable way of life; a specific religious experience, worked out in innumerable varieties of lives, but in essence identical.

Anglo-Catholics believe that the Church of England shares in this idea. But here the question arises again as to what we mean strictly by the title Catholic. And admittedly there are two interpretations of the word. No sane Christian can deny the working of the Holy Spirit

outside the historical Catholic tradition. There is in fairly common use within the Church of England a 'Bidding Prayer' in which the preacher bids the congregation pray 'for Christ's Holy Catholic Church, that is, the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the world.' This wider Church includes all the baptized, of whatever communion, and every Catholic Christian acknowledges its existence. But there is also the closer, more recognizable, historic Church of which I have written. It is sadly true that even this is broken up into sections, some of them denying the Catholicity of the others; but this is a temporary difficulty, which must in God's time be out-grown.

What then, in brief, are the marks of this historic body, to which Anglo-Catholics hold that they, in common with the rest of the Anglican Communion, belong? They are, the acknowledgement of the historic Creeds, the Sacraments, the Apostolic Ministry. In accepting these the English Church transcends the unhappy temporary divisions which at present distract Christendom.

But, it may well be asked, if this is all, what is the trouble about? Do not all Anglicans accept these fundamentals? In this sense all members of the Church of England might be called Anglo-Catholics. They might, and rightly. But there are real distinctions, which cannot be disguised, and which are the causes of con-

troversy. Let us choose for our illustrations some of those matters which do in fact divide Anglicans to-day; there is no room to do much more than mention them.

1. Anglo-Catholics accept the doctrine of the objective Real Presence of our Lord in the Holy Communion, with the implications which follow from that belief.

2. They place Eucharistic worship in the forefront of their adoration of God, and emphasize that fact by giving it the most prominent place both on Sundays and weekdays. The accusation that Anglo-Catholics would substitute hearing Mass for receiving Holy Communion is negatived by facts. None are more eager to press increased frequency of Communion than they; and it is notorious that Anglo-Catholic churches are not those in which the fewest communions are made.

3. Anglo-Catholics lay far more stress than Evangelicals on the use, allowed in the Prayer Book, of private or auricular Confession and Absolution. It may however be noted that this custom is much less a matter of controversy than it was. Most reasonable persons now regard it as a subject which calls at least for serious and unprejudiced consideration.

4. Probably the element in Anglo-Catholicism which causes most *discussion* is the ceremonial setting of it. This is to be expected, for the average man who goes to church is naturally moved by what he sees there. The Eucharistic

vestments, incense, and the ordinary method of Catholic worship as historically understood, help with the other elements just mentioned to produce that 'atmosphere' which is different from the traditional setting to which, until comparatively lately, Englishmen had grown accustomed. Admittedly they are of importance, for at different points they touch doctrine, and involve our beliefs about the Church and its authority over the individual conscience. It would be foolish and unreal to minimize their significance.

At the moment the separation between Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals is real and deep. We gain little by attempting to hide our convictions, or by compromising where solid agreement cannot yet be found. Anglo-Catholics must be firm on the doctrines and practices which make them in spirit one with the historic Church of the Ages, while doing their utmost to set them forth in a broad-minded spirit of conciliation.

Anglo-Catholics in the Church of England

It is this 'Catholic Idea' which Anglo-Catholicism asserts within the Church of England. The whole justification for it is in the formularies; in the Prayer Book, and in a perfectly allowable interpretation of the Thirty-nine Articles.

The reason why so many people, Members of Parliament and others, consider that we have no right to be where we are, is that the inherent Catholicism of the Church of England had become overlaid by a practical Protestantism which has lasted into our day, and claims the Church as its own. The Oxford Movement, of which Anglo-Catholicism is the logical outcome, was an effort to reassert, first theologically at the Universities, and then doctrinally and ceremonially in the parishes, the fact that a Catholic interpretation of Anglicanism is historically legitimate.

Anglo-Catholicism, then, is an influence which permeates and leavens the body in which it rightly exists. It is not a separate, certainly not a hostile, organization, though it has unhappily been found necessary to organize resistance to much resolute attack. Unhappy history has forced it into the position of a 'party.' It never ought to have become anything of the kind. Anglo-Catholics are just those persons within the Church of England who believe in her historic Catholic character and desire to assert that claim.

There can be no denying that their influence has gone far. The Prayer Book controversy, if it has done nothing else, has proved that the official Church of England is prepared to allow that which is really essential to the Anglo-Catholic claim. The average parish church, in its services, furniture, and atmosphere, is a

very different place from what it was a hundred years ago. The revival of the sacramental life, and of Eucharistic worship, is clearly marked. It may be claimed also that, while the new stir of life, which is obvious to those who look underneath the surface, owes much to all schools of thought within the Church, the Anglo-Catholic contribution is large, and increasing in volume.

But if it be asked whether the movement has done what it was hoped that it would do ; whether it shows a marked superiority in such matters as the number of worshippers in church, and the average communicants' roll ; whether the fruits of the Spirit are always unmistakably marked in the lives of Anglo-Catholics ; whether it is obviously converting the English nation to God, we must sadly and penitently answer, No ; not at present.

Again, then, what is the reason why the faith which to us is so fine and satisfying has so far failed to do that great work we expected it to do ? In the next chapter we will try to examine some of the faults of the Anglo-Catholic method.

III

ANGLO-CATHOLIC FAULTS, REAL AND ALLEGED

WE return to the question with which this book began : Why is our presentation of Catholicism unpopular ? Why have we failed to win any really strong following in the English nation, after nearly a hundred years of vigorous work ?

This is partly inevitable. The great movements of science and thought which have distinguished our times are really unparalleled in the history of the world ; and the spiritual and mental unrest which was bound to follow them has made immense difficulties for every presentation of supernatural belief. Moreover, there is no sphere of life in which change is so unwelcome as in religion. It always takes a long time for new or revived spiritual ideas to strike root ; and we have not had (fortunately) behind us the political and social forces which broke the popular resistance at the Reformation. And the Catholic Revival has been dogged throughout by those memories of the fires of Smithfield, the threat of the Spanish Armada, and the Gunpowder Plot which are

among the most remarkable and fatal phenomena of modern history.

These and some other causes which have held back the Catholic Revival are partly inevitable and partly due to sheer misunderstanding. There is a very general, and apparently almost invincible, ignorance in a great part of the public mind as to what we really are and want ; and misconceptions, which would be ludicrous if they were not so sad, have beset us from the first. These must be borne until our aims are better understood, and we have proved our real loyalty to the Church of England as well as to the greater Catholic Church of which she is a part.

But some of the faults attributed to us are true, and are in some ways responsible for the partial failure which we must penitently acknowledge. They proceed in many cases from haste, ungraciousness, or an inability to see the point of view of some of those to whom we minister ; and they have done too much harm not only to ourselves, but to the cause of Christianity in general in days when the utmost wisdom and generosity have been called for. Let us look first at these charges which are brought against us by misconception or in ignorance, and of which we are not guilty ; and then examine the others, which call for serious and immediate thought.

1. *It is said that Anglo-Catholics are aggressive.* Yes, undeniably. And of course they

must be so. Every great cause is aggressive, or it would not be a great cause at all. Do not all the various schools of religious thought hope that they will prevail, while drawing into themselves whatever is fine and noble in others? Who would respect them if they did not? The idea, so prevalent to-day, that you can cast all the widely different spiritual 'contributions' into a heap, stir them up, and expect the perfect religion to emerge from the amalgam, is as little reasonable as the late nineteenth-century idea of democracy. There must be a 'norm' or a 'centre' or a 'pool,' into which whatever is fine and permanent in each contribution can be put. And we honestly believe that historic Catholicism, strengthened and illuminated by the sure results of modern knowledge, is that norm or centre or pool. How can we help, then, saying so as charitably as possible? But we also want to understand and appreciate to the full all those who differ from us.

2. *It is said that Anglo-Catholics are obscurantist*; that is, that they are unwilling to admit the impact on the Faith of the immensely developed scientific and scholarly advance of the last half-century. This, I think, is almost entirely untrue. There are reactionaries (called, in this connection, Fundamentalists) in every religious body to-day. Some are dazzled by the apparent immobility of the Church of Rome; others have never taken the trouble to read the books

on the subject involved. But Anglo-Catholicism is deeply coloured to-day by liberal theological thought. An interesting proof of this was the appearance a year or two ago of the book called *Essays Catholic and Critical*. This was not attacked as obscurantist even by the most vigorous of modern critics ; and it was welcomed in a highly appreciative review by the *Church Times*. And just now has appeared the *New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, edited by Bishop Gore and two other Anglo-Catholic scholars. It is not too much to say that both these books were eagerly welcomed by most Anglo-Catholic scholars and people of the rank and file. It is no longer possible to maintain that any but a few are reactionary ; indeed, the movement has an unrivalled opportunity of combining the historic Catholic religion with sound and unfettered modern learning.

3. *It is said that Anglo-Catholics have been inclined to pay too little regard to the feelings of those who do not share their views* ; that they often press their own presentment of religion on those who have no means of defending themselves. We may as well face the crucial example. An Anglo-Catholic priest is appointed to a parish where the traditions are, let us say, 'Moderate.' At once, in some cases (by no means all), he changes everything, with little explanation, or regard to the feelings of his parishioners. Vestments, Sung Mass, incense, and the rest of what he himself loves, appear in

the church. In consequence, a great number of good communicants are outraged, and feel, perhaps quite wrongly, that they can no longer worship in their parish church. Now this may be no very great hardship if there is a church near by where they can get the kind of service to which they are accustomed ; though even then it is hard to forsake the spiritual home of a lifetime. Still, they are not in a hopeless case. But it is different in one-church areas, especially in the country. Here real and sharp pain has been caused, and in too many cases the church has been practically emptied.

This cannot possibly be anything but deeply harmful to religion. Surely it is the duty of an incumbent in such circumstances to see that the Anglo-Catholics living in the parish have the opportunity of offering the Holy Sacrifice on Sundays and Holy Days, of making their confession when they wish to do so, and of getting the help they need from their parish priest ; and for the rest to be very patient and loving with the old-fashioned people. He can teach and teach and teach ; and when the folk are ready, make the changes which then they will welcome. I believe that this view commends itself to an always growing number of Anglo-Catholic priests ; but it is difficult to live down the mistakes of the past.

4. *It is said that Anglo-Catholics are apt to teach a system rather than the Gospel of Christ.* This is a criticism which goes deep, and to

which we all need to pay serious attention. It is, to be frank, a danger which has always loomed over the Catholic Church, and has been apparent to the wisest and best of her teachers. The Church is so grand, so illustrious, that her children must always love her passionately. But such love must never be allowed to detract from the primary devotion to the Person and Teaching of our Lord. Yet I sometimes tremble a little when I hear a sermon here and there, or drop into the Catechism in some parishes on a Sunday afternoon. I wonder whether we may not be in peril here. At any rate, we may all profitably examine ourselves on this subject.

5. *It is said that Anglo-Catholic services are sometimes unintelligible to the ordinary member of the Church of England.* This is often too true, and causes a very great part of the failure we are bound to notice in many parishes. Whatever may be said as to the loyalty or disloyalty of using other orders of service than those which one has solemnly promised to observe, or so modifying them that they are unrecognizable by the ordinary man, such action is fatal to the influence of any person or body of persons who so act. In London, and a few other great cities, congregations may be drawn partly from a distance. But when the average man goes to church and cannot recognize the service as connected with the Anglican Communion to which he belongs, that church is doomed to sure disaster. There are a good many keen priests to-day who are

finding this out, and would be thankful if they could make a fresh start, but cannot. They know how many new people come once to their church, are completely bewildered, and never come again. So there is no new life in the congregation, and the communicants and congregations shrink depressingly.

This is most perfectly seen in those churches where the services, or parts of them, are inaudible. I have read Otto's *Idea of the Holy*, and I know all there is to be said about mystery, and the sense of holiness which comes from the quiet, and personally I have great sympathy with this point of view. But the ordinary Englishman wants to hear the words of the service. And I am sure he is right.

It is well for other priests to realize how painful it is to the congregation when the minister puts, or attempts to put, his own personality into the liturgy. The officiant cannot be too reverently impersonal. After all, he is not himself, but the representative of the worshipping congregation.

6. *It is said that Anglo-Catholics are exclusive.* It is sometimes said in responsible quarters that a day will come when, Catholicism having triumphed, there will be no more room in the Church of England for Liberals or Evangelicals. This is intolerable. All keen men must hope that the day will come when that which they believe to be true will be recognized by every one. They will do all they can to

preach it, as attractively as possible. But the present strength of the Church of England, and her power of achieving great things for Christendom, lie in her comprehensiveness, through which men otherwise divided can come to understand one another, and to arrive gradually at such agreement as may be possible. So far as authority sees fit to allow it, each strand in the present Church of England should be allowed to follow its legitimate development.

And there is something rather more domestic to be said on this point. Some Anglo-Catholics have an unfortunate habit of narrowing the limits even of their own group. Now this, now that detail is used for purposes of exclusion. 'Oh, So-and-so isn't a Catholic,' is a phrase much too frequently heard. And if you ask why, you are given some reason so futile that you can hardly believe the speaker to be serious. But he is ; too serious by half.

On the other hand, too many good people have got into the habit of disowning their Anglo-Catholicism. I was much disturbed the other day by reading a public letter from the Bishop of Southwark, saying that he has never been an Anglo-Catholic. I should have thought that if there was any one who had the right to the name, it was the Bishop of Southwark. A fine title is being narrowed down, not by the wish of real Anglo-Catholics, who would, I am sure, be the first to desire that it should be used in its widest connotation.

7. *It is said that Anglo-Catholics are Romanizers.* And what does that mean? I find a great many Anglo-Catholics rather acidly anti-Roman. But this is the stick with which we are usually beaten. It is well to look at it a little carefully. If one is told that this doctrine, or that form of ceremonial, is Roman, must one therefore turn from it with a pious shudder? I can understand perfectly a man saying, 'This doctrine is, as I believe, wholly or partially untrue.' 'This claim appears to me to be manifestly not in accordance with historical truth.' 'This ceremony is to me ridiculous.' The man who so regards a theological, an historical, or liturgical problem may be right or wrong in his opinion; but he is at least taking a line which is reasonable. Whereas, to maintain without qualification that 'this is Roman, and *therefore* wrong,' seems to be unreasonable.

I myself can never be a Roman Catholic, for reasons which appear to me to be very good ones; but I realize that in the Catholic and Christian religion, in history and dogma, above all in prayer, worship, and adoration of God, we have far too much in common for a reasonable Anglican to be able to think or speak in a hostile manner of the religion of the Church of Rome. And I will venture to say something more. Quiet and deep thinkers in England, who could by no means be called Anglo-Catholics, see that the great hope of Christendom lies in a reformed Roman Church. We must learn

to think in terms of centuries, not of years or decades of years. And when we consider what a reformed Church of England, reunited with the West, as well as with Englishmen at home, may be able to do, we may hesitate before employing too easily so question-begging a term as 'Romanizing.'

8. *It is taken as following from the last fault attributed to Anglo-Catholics that they are disloyal to the Church of England.* There is really not very much need to discuss this point. It is so generally agreed to-day that formularies and services dating from the middle of the seventeenth century, and composed, for the most part, a century earlier than that, need revision if they are to be intelligently used to-day. The truth is that the life of the Church of England has burst the swaddling-bands of 1662, and that she must be provided with new clothes. Or, to put it in another way, when the laws of any community become too narrow for its life, they are either changed before they are broken, or else first broken and then changed. We have all alike to face the latter of the alternatives ; for that is what in fact has happened. It looks as though the change would now have to come through administration ; at any rate, let us all be patient with one another, and work together for peace.

IV

ANGLO-CATHOLIC CLAIMS

AN attempt has been made in the foregoing chapters of this book to argue briefly the right of the Anglo-Catholic Movement to a place within the broad comprehensiveness of the Anglican Communion. We then passed on to consider with much penitence the faults which may fairly be alleged against some of us ; though it is only fair to remember that some popular charges laid against us are without foundation, and that very many Anglo-Catholics must be acquitted of guilt in connection with the aberrations which others must acknowledge to be just. The public mind, even the mind of the ordinary Churchman, is apt to forget this, and to saddle the whole movement with the blunders of a few conscientious but mistaken persons.

We now pass to the consideration of the claims of Anglo-Catholics that they bring much which is positively good and necessary to the full life of the Church of England. In the last and crucial chapter we shall attempt to see how a better spirit is emerging from the welter of misunderstanding, assertiveness, and

common recrimination which have saddened so far the relations between the Catholic Revival and the official Church. The time has now come for the appearance of a constructive policy of conciliation and co-operation. We must lead up to this chapter by asking at this stage what the Anglo-Catholic Movement claims to be able to give to the general life of the Church in England.

Anglo-Catholicism Represents a Legitimate Development of Catholic Christianity

So we firmly believe. No one knows exactly when or how the Christian religion first came to this country. But we have exquisite traditions and legends going back into the remotest antiquity, with a few bits of archaeological evidence scattered here and there. It is certain that in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries a singularly beautiful Celtic Christianity, having its earliest historical sources in Ireland, was responsible for the conversion or reconversion of our forefathers in Scotland, Wales, and the North of England. In process of time that stream of Christianity mingled—not without temporary difficulty—with the Roman Christianity of Augustine and Gregory. It is useless and ungenerous to exalt one of these noble traditions at the expense of the other, as is too often done in our day, generally in order to prove that England owes little to Western Catholicism as represented by the early Roman Church.

The Church of England was very early merged in the general life of the Western Church. It shared the advantages—spiritual, liturgical, and scholarly—of that great religious civilization. It has passed, in common with the rest of the Western Church, through the process of reformation, which unhappily has led to a breach of communion. But our essential claim is that of continuity ; that we are not another Church from that of pre-Reformation days, but are in all necessary matters the same body. It is this fact which Anglo-Catholics—in common, indeed, with the great majority of Anglicans—are determined to assert against all contradiction, from whatever source it may come.

But this Catholicism has a Definitely National and English Colouring

It may perhaps be an anachronism to say that the pre-Reformation Church in this country was Anglo-Catholic. But it is quite certain that the Church of England is inextricably intertwined with the national history and the national temperament. It is of the utmost importance that we should remember this. What we stand for is a religion which is international and also English.

This must apply not only to the times before the Reformation, but to the days since the sixteenth century as well. In the arduous search

for what is ' ecumenical ' it seems to be usually forgotten that there has been any Church history in England during the last four hundred years. Surely this is rather futile. When we talk about the consensus of East and West, and particularly when we appeal to the custom of one or other of the divisions of the Church since the Great Schism in the eleventh century, are we not bound in honesty to consider that the Anglican Communion as it has existed during the last four centuries may have something to contribute ? It is obvious that the Church of England as she stands to-day has been much coloured by post-Reformation events, while retaining the essentials of historic Catholicism. We shall be wise if we take these important facts into consideration when we try to commend our faith to our fellow countrymen.

Yet our view of the Church must be bigger than Anglicanism

Anglo-Catholics have no greater duty to the Church of England in general—except the example of whole-hearted devotion to our Lord—than the attempt to show what is the true place of the Anglican Communion in Christendom.

We have just thought of the importance of laying stress on the national complexion of our Christianity. That is one side. But it is too fatally easy to slip from that to a contempt and hostility towards some other part of the Church.

The very fact that the word 'Continental' in ecclesiastical controversy is used as a term of abuse is proof of this. Some have only to say that a custom, a vestment, sometimes even a doctrine, is 'Continental,' and that is enough. Is not this rather narrow-minded? The thing may be vulgar, undesirable, untrue. Very well, let us say so; but again, do not let us beg the question by a prejudiced use of words.

It is the fatal fault of some Anglican lines of thought that they almost completely forget the Catholic Church in Europe; or remember it only with a virtuous shudder of indignation. God forbid that we should for a moment forget the enormous importance of the young Churches in India or Persia; but let us remember historic Catholicism. We must not regard it with unhopeful hostility, however unkind it may often be to us.

A hopeful little event happened not long ago, in connection with the thousandth anniversary of the illustrious Minster of York. This was celebrated by a magnificent Solemn Eucharist sung in the cathedral in the presence of both the Primates of the Church of England. The then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Davidson, afterwards said that the service was in full accord with the tradition of the Church of England. Now if any unprejudiced person who had been present at York Minster on that occasion had found himself shortly afterwards at a High Mass,

say in the Lateran Basilica in Rome, he would have had no doubt that the two services were recognizably the same thing. Uninstructed persons may exclaim at such a statement ; but it is nevertheless true. And we ought to be glad of it. For while we refuse to accede to Roman claims which we believe to be unhistorical, we share with the rest of the Catholic Church in creed and sacrament, in ministry and worship, in all the wonders of the life of prayer.

These lines of approach are the only way towards eventual reunion. The Catholic Church of the future will no doubt be greater than that which we now know. It will be enhanced by fresh wonders of knowledge and prayer. It will transcend the limits of nationalism, while allowing full liberty to whatever is good in the national spirit. But it is the perilous and glorious privilege of the Church of England in general, and of Anglo-Catholicism in particular, to uphold our connection with the whole Catholic Church, our continuity with the ancient tradition, and our intimate sharing in the essential doctrine and order and worship of the Church.

Anglo-Catholicism must show itself capable of assimilating the New Knowledge

This point has already been touched upon in the course of the argument rebutting the charge that Anglo-Catholics are obscurantists. It is

of immense importance, for the future not only of theology but of the prayer life depends very largely upon the capacity of the Church of England, and of Anglo-Catholicism, to assimilate new knowledge. Perhaps it may be said that there are two departments of the religious life in which this is specially the case. On the one hand, the fresh discoveries of science—such as those in the realms of anthropology, biology, and psychology—have developed our conception of God Himself, and revolutionized our thought about His creation of the human race. And on the other hand, modern scholarship has given us a knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, from the historical point of view, which is closer than anything we have had since the first age of the Church. He stands out clearer, more compelling than ever, in a vastly extended cosmic atmosphere.

All this necessitates a great deal of theological re-thinking ; but it means more than that. It means that this new knowledge has to be made available for the adoration and prayer of the average man and woman. We may properly claim that Anglo-Catholic scholarship has laid and is laying the whole Church—not only the Anglican Communion—under a debt of gratitude for much fearless study and writing. But it is imperative that minor controversies should be swept out of the way, in order that the Church may be free to face these searching movements of thought.

Anglo-Catholicism lays stress on Eucharistic Worship

This is probably the aspect of Anglo-Catholicism which bulks largest in the public mind, because it has led in so many parishes to an evident change in the form of worship on Sundays. The rehabilitation of Eucharistic worship from its comparative neglect is one of the most notable achievements of the Revival, and in time will be more thankfully realized than it is as yet by the Church in general.

That it has caused a good deal of pain to people who had grown used to the centrality of Morning Prayer in the worship of Sunday is sad, but, if we believe in the historic tradition, inevitable. We are quite sure that the Holy Communion is the point around which the rest of our worship must group itself. Yet it is unkind and foolish to belittle such fine services as Morning and Evening Prayer. The only trouble is that Mattins has in quite modern times been pushed into a place it was never meant to occupy, and has thus tended to exclude the Sung Eucharist from its right position of eminence.

Our age is realizing more clearly the truth which underlies the phrase, ' It is the Mass that matters.' In the widest sense, and apart altogether from words which may stir up controversy, it is the Catholic idea of Eucharistic worship that we must regain. The emphasis laid upon this truth by Anglo-Catholics has

put the Church under an obligation. It might sometimes have been done in practice more tactfully, and with a more tender consideration for a prejudice which should win all sympathy ; but the matter itself is too grave for permanent compromise.

Anglo-Catholicism is rescuing from oblivion the Sense of Obligation in English Religion

Whatever the readers of this book may think of obligation as a motive in personal and corporate religion, it can hardly be denied that the lapse of such a sense is responsible for much of the falling away of England from the practice of worship and penitence. Since the eighteenth century the Church has spoken with a faltering voice as to the duty of public worship and regular communion.

So far as the sense of obligation is founded on the fear of hell, it is no doubt good that it should have been less prominent than in past ages. But it is a bad thing when a Church fails to say distinctly that there are some things we must all do for the love of God, the persistent neglect of which in the end disqualifies the offender from effective membership in the society. The shallow and futile talk about public worship (for instance) which you hear everywhere in England to-day shows that any sense of obligation is practically dead. The Church of England has almost ceased to say

that you really cannot call yourself a Churchman unless you are a communicant and go to church; or it says it so feebly that crowds of men and women who never dream of doing either are outraged if they are told that they are not in any true sense Church people.

It is all very well to say that it really does not matter very much eternally whether you do these things or not. But it does matter enormously for most men and women. It is only comparatively the few who are spiritually awake enough to be able to pray and adore God, and to find penitence, and communion with Him, apart from the corporate worship of the Church. A few there are, everywhere, who can do so. But they are few. And in actual practice it is vital to the great majority of human beings that they should feel clearly the obligation of certain acts of worship, penitence, and communion. They respond to it, and in the end they will give it a respect they will never feel for a religion which rubs so lightly as to leave little or no impression. There is no reason to suppose that this call to obligation is natural only to lower forms of religion or to spiritually backward communities. A Church anywhere which desires to call men to the service of God must make high demands upon them; only the highest expectation will bring forth a worthy response.

The revival of the teaching of obligation has been another cause of the unpopularity of Anglo-Catholicism. That must be borne. But

those of us who have worked for many years in great parishes, as well as among more educated people, are convinced by long experience that this teaching is necessary for every class. It leads to no religious slavery, or obedience born of fear ; it issues in full liberty of spirit.

Anglo-Catholicism tries to stand for the Richest Development of the Spiritual Life

It is the claim of historic Catholicism that it stands for the richest, most varied, most complete type of Christian saintliness. Never must we fail to thank God for other movements of the Spirit of which there are such abundant signs in the world. But there is in fact a great main stream of Christian devotion which brings forth supremely the fruits of holiness. When Catholicism is charged with being a ' system ' it can point to the hundreds of thousands of holy and humble lives in Christ which it has brought forth and fostered. We who are Anglo-Catholics, with all our faults, thank God that in fact we share in this life-giving stream.

For these and other reasons Anglo-Catholics believe that they ought to be capable of setting forth a renewed Catholicism fitted to our age and country

I fear that some of the claims outlined above will appear to certain of my friends arrogant and exclusive. I have tried not to put them

so. We have so much to regret, so much to make us penitent for our failures ; but we can never apologize for the cause. Fail as we may, the great ideals stand out ; at least we are aiming high.

And now we reach the sum of it all. We are sure that a sincere, loving, peaceable Anglo-Catholicism within the Church of England, tolerant, trying to understand and appreciate what is different from itself, ought to be able to give to the world a renewed type of historic Catholicism. The movement has remained sufficiently malleable, in theology as in practice, despite the attempts of noble but not very far-seeing men to tie it down to more reactionary standards. It can now be said that this attempt has definitely failed, and that Anglo-Catholicism in the main has broadened out under the influence of its very distinguished scholars and thinkers.

In this matter, indeed, it has shared the general life of the Church of England. While other parts of the Church have shown during the past few centuries a decided tendency to define more closely, and thus to exclude rather than to entertain new theological movements, the Church of England has retained a large measure of liberty. Anglo-Catholic scholars, therefore, have not been bound by the limitations which have cramped those in some other communions, and have been able to weld together historical Catholicism and the new learning.

They are able to illuminate the old and beautiful tradition by the light of the renewed conception of God given by modern science, and by the freshness of our understanding of the unique revelation of God in our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the concluding chapter we will consider whether there is not already in sight a new spirit of conciliation, a more perfect attempt both by the authority of the Church of England and on our part, which will enable us to throw our whole power into the world struggle for Christianity in which the Anglican Communion will soon be engaged.

V

IS IT PEACE?

IT cannot be maintained that the Church of England has in the past been an indulgent mother to her Anglo-Catholic children, nor that they have always been dutiful members of the family. Indeed, the history will make sad reading in days to come. But it seems clear now that the period of strife is almost at an end. It is the duty of all who care for the welfare of the Church to be among those who look for peace.

The Situation Yesterday

Ever since about the year 1830, when the first stirrings of the Catholic Revival became visible, until yesterday, the official Church of England has offered a persistent opposition to the movement, going at times to the length of imprisoning priests. The force of the Revival has been pushed into a corner, where it has remained strongly intrenched, always on the defensive, attacked but never finally defeated. It has been compelled to organize itself into strong societies, formed partly for propaganda, but very largely also for defence. A bitter and

warlike spirit has distinguished both sides, which persists even yet in some quarters.

It is unnecessary to go into the miserable details of the past. Unhappily the effect of the old warfare is imperilling the present hopes of peace, and must therefore be reckoned with before we can hope for final peace. Faults on both sides have exacerbated the situation to such an extent that it is sometimes thought treason to work for peace.

There is still a fair, though an always diminishing, number of Anglo-Catholics who regard the official Church of England with a steady hostility, and think of the bishops as men whose main object is the suppression of Catholic ideals in the Church.

This kind of outlook spreads from priest to congregation ; there are still centres of glowing devotion to our Lord where the Church of England is regarded as a hard step-mother, to be avoided and forgotten so far as is possible. I do not say that this is common ; indeed, most of the Anglo-Catholic laity are crying out for peace. It is only sad that a bitterness of spirit not difficult to understand should still remain here and there.

Yet it is true that this spirit grows rarer as the new and happier situation develops. The bitterness is going, though there are dioceses here and there where there is still either persecution, or else a quiet use of patronage and influence for the suppression of Anglo-Catholic-

ism. These are unescapable facts at present, and we cannot be certain that similar cases may not occur in the future. But we must not allow local and temporary conditions, however exhausting and painful for those who suffer from them, to affect general action. Too much attention to hard cases makes bad statesmanship.

The Wider Movements of Religion

For it becomes more and more impossible to see our local circumstances outside the context of the great issues which are now facing the Church. The press of far bigger problems is forcing us to see our internal disagreements as domestic, and not really of such importance as to be allowed to distract us from the wider duties with which we are being compelled to deal. I will mention only three of these as examples of many more.

1. The Lambeth Conference of 1930 cannot escape from the consideration of the problem of reunion. The results of the conferences at Jerusalem and Lausanne ; the movement of the young Churches in India and other countries : these are matters which will soon bring us all up against our fundamental beliefs about the Church itself. We shall in all probability be faced with proposals which will seem to some of us incompatible with the Catholic view of the Church. We must get ready to face these discussions in an atmosphere undisturbed by smaller controversies.

2. Every parish priest—indeed, every member of the Church—is aware of the widespread and open flouting of Christian moral standards which marks our day ; we meet with it among our own people and in our congregations. But what we see is a corner of a vast and disastrous breakdown which can only be met by the united forces of the Christian Church. Again, we dare not let details distract us from so great a call to witness for God.

3. We perpetually lament the loss to the institutional Church at least, and often to Christianity itself, of much of the best, wisest, most cultured of the national life. And if we inquire what is the cause of this, we find that while it is manifold, one of the reasons most constantly alleged is our disunion among ourselves, and our quarrelling over matters which may be properly regarded as trifling in comparison with the urgency of the times.

These and other movements all round us ought long ago to have attracted our whole attention ; but we are so blinded by our sectional worries and activities that we almost lose sight of them.

The Effect on the Church

But not wholly. The issue of these events and thoughts has really stirred the Church of England ; and one of the effects of them is the more generous attitude adopted towards Anglo-Catholicism by the official Church. This

has been shown in the course of the Revision of the Prayer Book. It is not my intention to deal with the details of this long and exhausting struggle. We do not get all for which we have asked; but throughout the years there has gradually emerged a more understanding and conciliatory spirit. The final form in which the Revision appeared, though it has in our eyes obvious blemishes, is an enormous advance towards a recognition of the ideals for which we have so long striven. When we consider the whole of the circumstances, and remember quite recent history, we shall be lacking in generosity on our side if we do not recognize cordially what great efforts have been made to help us.

But this fact has brought into the open a question which is vital to Anglo-Catholics. What is the relation of the authority of the Church of England with the wider authority of the whole historic Catholic Church? We have not yet been formally called to obey by the authority of the general episcopate of the Church in England. That is why some of my friends have felt themselves able to resist the various stages of the Revision of the Prayer Book. They said that, whatever they might feel bound to do when actually faced by lawful authority, they might legitimately express their opinion while matters were still under discussion. I did not and do not agree with their policy, but I understand why they acted as

they did. And I believe that hundreds of these men will be prepared to obey if the real call of authority comes to them.

But suppose that when that call comes it should demand something which is contrary to the agreed judgement of the historic Catholic Church, East and West, and of the formularies of the Church of England as well ; what then ? Well, of course, in that case persons who were convinced that truth was being violated would have to resist, and if no other possibility remained, to leave the Church of England. But we shall not so act, surely, unless some really fundamental point of the faith or order of the Church be endangered ; certainly we shall not involve ourselves in so great a dispute for the sake of smaller matters upon which only one or other part of the wider Church has decided.

I do not believe, and I am sure that most Anglo-Catholics do not believe, that we shall be called to face such vital issues. If we are so called, we shall have to act as wisely as we may.

But in the meantime our internal difficulties have narrowed down to small proportions. And I am sure—it is really to say this that I have written this small book—I am sure that the time has come for the Church of England and Anglo-Catholics to make mutual acts of faith in one another. It is time that we sank minor issues, and made a bold bid for unity. I am in a position to know beyond any doubt that

great numbers of Anglo-Catholics who have as good right to the name as any, are with me here. We do not believe that loyalty to our Lord and the Church are involved in the matters which are still at issue in the Prayer Book controversy. We are further convinced that in the present state of the Church and the world nothing but fundamental matters must be allowed to hinder that internal peace which is so imperatively needed, now at once. And we do not think that such matters are now at issue between us and the authority of the English Church. We are determined no longer to spend our forces upon controversy among ourselves, but to use all the powers we have in a far greater warfare.

What does this imply? It implies on the part of the Church of England an immediate practical exercise of authority, founded on a generous interpretation of the Revised Prayer Book; an exercise of authority agreed upon and held to by a bench of bishops united so far as at present they can be.

It implies on the Anglo-Catholic side an equal generosity in the putting away of fear and hostility, and if necessary the making of some sacrifice for the sake of the Church. It means the forgetting and forgiving of past sorrows, with penitence on our side for anything in our spirit which has been hard or wrongly aggressive.

It implies on both sides a determination to see

the situation and the responsibilities of the future broadly and charitably. We are so much nearer together than we have ever been before. Neither side is likely to make its act of faith in vain.

Printed by A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd.
London and Oxford

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C0-AYL-384